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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/664,336	09/17/2003	Mark Julian Roberts	06411 USA	4139
23543	7590	01/25/2006	EXAMINER	
AIR PRODUCTS AND CHEMICALS, INC. PATENT DEPARTMENT 7201 HAMILTON BOULEVARD ALLENTOWN, PA 181951501				DOERRLER, WILLIAM CHARLES
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
		3744		

DATE MAILED: 01/25/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	10/664,336	Applicant(s)	ROBERTS ET AL.
Examiner	William C. Doerrler	Art Unit	3744

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) Claim(s) 26 is/are allowed.
6) Claim(s) 1,2,4,5,7-11,21-25,27-29,31 and 32 is/are rejected.
7) Claim(s) 3,6,12-20 and 30 is/are objected to.
8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) The drawing(s) filed on 17 September 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2-22-05, 5-2-05, 9-17-03
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

Claim 20 is objected to because of the following informalities: In line 7 of the claim "refrigerant" is repeated. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1,2,5,8,9,11,21-23,27 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the German '905 reference from the IDS.

The German '905 reference discloses in figure 3, a method for cooling a feed gas in a first heat exchanger (W1) and a second heat exchanger (W3), with compressed refrigerant being work expanded to provide the cooling in the second heat exchanger. A third heat exchanger (W2) is used to cool the compressed refrigerant which will provide the cooling to the second heat exchanger. The flow rate of work expanded refrigerant in the second heat exchanger is less than the flow rate in the third heat exchanger since the refrigerant leaving compressor K2 is split with a portion passing through a second portion of the third heat exchanger and the remainder passing through the second heat exchanger. In regard to claim 5, the compressed and cooled feed is split and a portion is reduced in pressure and used to cool the remaining feed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1,2,4,5,7-11,24,25,27-29,31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu in view of the German '905 reference from the IDS. Liu discloses applicants' basic inventive concept, a method for liquefying a gas with the gas being fed sequentially through two heat exchangers with the refrigerant for the second heat exchanger being cooled in a third heat exchanger, with independent first and second cooling systems, substantially as claimed with the exception of work expanding the refrigerant and having a higher refrigerant flow rate of the second refrigerant through the third heat exchanger than through the second heat exchanger. The German '905 reference shows these features to be old in the gas liquefaction art. It

would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicants' invention fro the teaching of the '905 German reference to modify the gas liquefaction system of Liu by work expanding the refrigerant to recover energy which may be lost and to have a higher refrigerant flow rate of the second refrigerant through the third heat exchanger than the second heat exchanger to improve cooling of the second refrigerant to improve the cooling of the second heat exchanger.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3,6,12-20 and 30 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 26 is allowed.

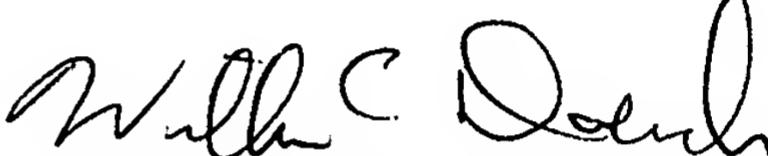
Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Low, DeLong and Eaton show gas liquefying methods with multiple stage refrigeration systems with heat exchange between systems.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William C. Doerrler whose telephone number is (571) 272-4807. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 6:30-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Cheryl Tyler can be reached on (571) 272-4834. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


William C Doerrler
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3744

WCD